

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application.

In paragraph 2 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-12, 14 and 15 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egan et al. in view of Haddock.

In paragraph 3 on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 3, 8 and 13 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eagan et al. and Haddock in further view of Smith.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest Applicants' invention as recited in the present claims.

Applicant's invention is for a method, apparatus and program storage device for minimizing the time required for performing an initial burnishing test cycle. For example, claim 1, as amended, requires performing an initial burnish operation, measuring an initial MR resistance for a head, determining whether the measured MR resistance indicates the head has clearance and completing the test cycle when the head is determined to have clearance.

Egan et al. fail to even mention measuring an initial MR resistance for a head, Eagan et al. do monitor the read signal for asperity/aberration related to pole tip protrusion. However, instead of measuring an initial MR resistance for a head, Eagan et al. discloses using the read signal to identify errors in the servo field, and specifically variations of the position error signal. Eagan et al. also mention detecting a lower frequency range signal associated with flying height changes that are indicative of a pole tip protrusion condition. Still further, Eagan et al. mentions that the read signal may

contain a thermally induced signal caused by thermal changes in the MR read head as well as magnetically induced signals caused by magnetic flux applied by the write element to the MR read element.

Nevertheless, Eagan et al. fail to suggest measuring an initial MR resistance for a head. Furthermore, from the above it can be seen that Eagan et al. fail to mention determining whether the measured MR resistance indicates the head has clearance.

Accordingly, Eagan et al. fails to teach, disclose or suggest the elements recited in independent claims 1, 6 and 11.

Haddock and Smith fail to overcome the deficiencies of Eagan et al. Haddock teaches burnishing a wear pad to obtain a desired fly height. However, Haddock fails to mention measuring an initial MR resistance for a head. Haddock also fails to mention determining whether the measured MR resistance indicates the head has clearance.

Smith merely teaches the measurement of absolute clearance between the MR transducer and the medium is for a nominal medium-transducer velocity. Smith suggests changing the velocity of the medium to identify a velocity that results in a desired fly height. However, Smith fails to disclose, teach or suggest measuring an initial MR resistance for a head to perform an initial burnishing cycle.

Accordingly, Eagan et al., Haddock and Smith, alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest Applicants' invention as recited in independent claims 1, 6 and 11.

Dependent claims 2-5, 7-10 and 12-15 are also patentable over the references, because they incorporate all of the limitations of the corresponding independent claims 1, 6 and 11, respectively. Further dependent claims 2-5, 7-10 and 12-15 recite additional

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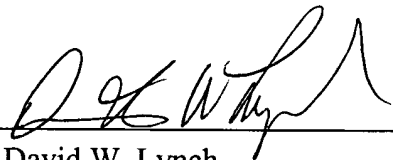
novel elements and limitations. Applicants reserve the right to argue independently the patentability of these additional novel aspects. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-5, 7-10 and 12-15 are patentable over the cited references.

On the basis of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of this application and its allowance are requested.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Attorney for Applicant, David W. Lynch, at 423-757-0264.

Respectfully submitted,

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